FIRST MEETING OF THE READING CLUB

7-11-4 November 22, 1942
7:27 p. m.- 9:30 p.m.

The presiding officer of the meeting attended by approximately thirty people was Miss Janet Goldberg. She suggested that the group create a mental world there at the bi-monthly meetings. She said that she would call for volunteers to participate in the further meetings of the reading club. At this meeting, the participants were all set up to start the meetings off. It was announced that there would be meetings every other week. This is only the present set-up and can be subject to change. Miss Goldberg asked whether or not it would be all right to assess the members about twenty cents per month for a general literary fund. Out of this fund would come the money to pay for subscriptions to magazines and for the purchasing of various books.

As a spring-board, Miss Goldberg read an article by Virginia Wolfe on the "Middle-brows" of society. Before she read, she gave a brief background material on the author.

After a very brief discussion of the article read by Miss Goldberg, Mr. Paul H. Kusuda read an excerpt from a letter written by Mr. Od. Richardson, Head of the Department of English at the Los Angeles City College.

Mr. Choyei Kondo gave a short talk to bolster the spirits of the people present in order that the venture would not die too prematurely. He spoke of his early life when in Tokio, a Canadian professor gave him his first ideas as to the importance of the values obtained through reading! He spoke a little of Bacon and his writings and remarked that Tenyyson's works were very comforting to him. It was declared that the man who reads or is reading is advanced further than the rest of the people. The person who reads knows the situations which led to the war and knows what is going now and the consequences it will bring. He stated that he was glad that the organization was formed because reading really enriches life very much. Then, he gave a short anecdote telling how he entered the insurance field. Life consists of determination, work, and preparation. Society will not give anyone any chance who has not the preparation to meet obstacles. The glaring defect of the Nisei is that their English is so low-- the vocabulary so narrow-- and the reading matter so very narrow. He urged everyone to keep up the club snce the only way to serve society is to be talented.

Mr. Shizuo Hori read the speech which was made by Vice-President Wallace on May 8, 1942.

A discussion followed with the furthercontinuance of the organization as the subject. Dr. William Bruce, Supervisor of Co-operative Enterprises of Manzanar, Inc., said that nothing

is so boring as listening to someone give an ill-digested account of a book or a magazine. He said that he was thinking of the technique of presentation of the club. It was observed that it would take more than two weeks to really digest something really well. He said that he usually has to read a book and then think a long time about what the author said and what he meant when he wrote the book. He suggested that the person to report on a book or an article read, digest the meaning, and then with the book in hand and a page or two of written matter, give the resume of the book.

Miss Chiye Mori, Editor of the Manzanar Free Press, suggested that two or three people read the same book and then discuss it to get various angles of the books read.

Miss Goldberg said that the group could operate on a workshop idea and prepare on subject for a month. That subject could be either a topic, a book, or a magazine article.

Miss Barbara Dougherty, Secretary to the Chief of Community Services, said that there should be a collective interest system whereby an individual would contribute something of definite interest to the rest of the people. She told of the time when a class in which she was enrolled spent about a year on one subject or book. Then, a paper was written on the topic and a report given to the class. She said that it proved to be of great value and interest and knowledge to her and that she was sure that those who listened to the reports benefited greatly also.

Miss Vidya Chandra, Teacher for the Manzanar High School, said that in order to get away from the book idea, a group should go into the topic business. In this way, an entire topic could be discussed by those present.

Mr. Tomomasa Yamazaki, who is now working with the Manzanar Free Press, said that he was not interested especially in the style of the books or articles which he reads. He said that he was much more interested in the ideas which are presented--the subject matter. Also, he felt that discussions should revolve not only around books, but also around topics or personalities such as Mr. Wilkie or Vice-President Wallace.

Miss Goldberg stated that she would like to talk about Mr. Wilkie.

There was a further discussion as to what is to happen two weeks from this date. Those who entered into the discussion were: Miss Barbara Dougherty, Dr. William Bruce, Miss Janet Goldberg, Mr. George Akahoshi, Nisei Assistant to the Chief of Community Services, Miss Chiye Mori, and Mr. Paul H. Kusuda.

Miss Mori suggested as the topic for the next meeting, "The Position of the Racial Minorities in this War." She

also suggested that appointments be made so that some people will be able to discuss certain racial groups.

Someone suggested that Vice-President Wallace's speech be the topic for the next meeting.

There was a brief discussion of the library situation and the collection of the literary fund. The assessment was finally decided to be set as twenty-five cents per month...

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